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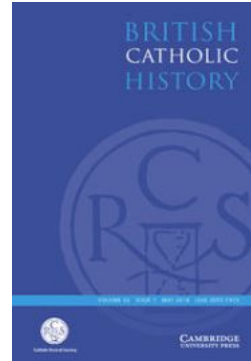
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Sara S. Poor and Nigel Smith, eds., *Mysticism and Reform, 1400-1750*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015, pp. x+408, \$45.00, ISBN: 978-0-268-03898-4

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imagery continued to appear in post-Reformation guise, and visual imagery could take on different confessional implications in reworked settings. This fine collection of essays displays many new ways of thinking about printed texts and their varied interactions with early modern culture and will serve to enrich an already fertile field of debate.

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Lucy Wooding

Sara S. Poor and Nigel Smith, eds., *Mysticism and Reform, 1400-1750*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2015, pp. x + 408, \$45.00, ISBN: 978-0-268-03898-4

The study of mystical theology in the early modern period is rapidly becoming fashionable. Once seen as the awkward sibling of the popular 'medieval mystical tradition', scholars are now turning their attention to an understudied and often oversimplified period in the history of mystical theology. The chapters in this edited volume were almost all presented as papers at the 'Mysticism, Reform and the Formation of Modernity' conference held at Princeton University in 2008. Much of the scholarship here suggests a positive future for this area, with this volume tackling the 'imaginary divide constructed by the historiography of the Reformation' which has hindered its development. Due to the substantial nature of an edited volume and the limitations of a review, the chapters discussed here have been chosen on the grounds that they are likely to be the most interesting to readers of this journal.

In the first chapter Euan Cameron presents a stimulating discussion of the different 'ways of knowing' in the pre- and post-Reformation periods. He documents the variety of ways in which mystical theology and scholasticism clashed in the late medieval period, and reveals how this impacted on the magisterial reformers of the sixteenth century. He argues that Martin Luther (1483-1546) read texts such as the *Theologia Germanica* and 'saw in them what he needed to see' (p. 39) while discarding anything of a questionable nature. Particularly refreshing is Cameron's exploration of mystical theology in the writings of the Pietists Johann Arndt (1555-1621) and Gottfried Arnold (1666-1714). Arnold in particular used mystical theology to counteract what he saw as arid scholasticism in the established Churches by arguing for a universal movement of the Holy Spirit among those of all confessions. This was not quite the 'radical conclusion' (p. 43) Cameron labels it, for it was a belief Arnold shared

with other influential figures such as the Quietist Pierre Poiret and the Philadelphians Richard Roach and Francis Lee.

Alana King's chapter rightly asserts that the best way to study the reception of mystical theology in Protestant circles is by discovering 'how those medieval texts are retained or transformed, reclaimed or reappropriated' (p. 51). King does this through an exploration of the reception of mystical works in the writings of sixteenth-century German minister Valentin Weigel (1533-88). Importantly, King is also sceptical of the concept of a 'mystical canon' of 'classics', remaining aware that writers such as Luther likely engaged with these texts individually, rather than as a coherent body of thought later labelled 'mysticism' (pp. 50, 71). Both King and Cameron present useful contributions towards a new framework for the study of the reception of mystical theology among early modern writers.

Despite the editors' statement that the volume is primarily concerned with Protestant engagements with mystical theology (p. 7), Catholics are well represented. Kees Schepers's chapter on the Saint Agnes Convent in Arnhem and the *Arnhem Mystical Sermons* proves to be at the very forefront of exciting new research. Despite Schepers's modest claim that much remains to be discovered about the sermons (p. 104), his chapter is an illuminating discussion of the contents of the diasporic manuscript collection of the nuns, on which little to nothing has been written in English. The discussion of the reception of Eckhart, Tauler, Suso, and Harphius among these nuns is particularly stimulating. The subject of religious women is continued in Kirsten M. Christensen's chapter concerning Maria van Hout (d. 1547) and the Sisters of Saint Agnes. Christensen's argument that Maria's treatises were meant as a 'gentle corrective to her confessor and like-minded clergy who hampered progress towards mystical union by overregulating devotional practice' (p. 126) is a theme many would recognize in the better known example of the struggle of the Benedictine nuns at Cambrai against their confessor Francis Hull in the 1630s. Christensen reminds us that this was a struggle experienced by many religious women in the period. The Benedictine Gertrude More (1606-1633) is the subject of Arthur F. Marotti's chapter, which details the now well-documented struggle between the Benedictine nuns and Hull. Marotti succinctly summarises the contents of More's works and her role in these struggles, but we should be careful not to overstate the claim that her works presented a form of 'personal autonomy' which threatened 'the structure of subordination' built into the rules of religious orders (p. 157). In their defences of Augustine Baker's doctrines we repeatedly find claims by More, Catherine Gascoigne and Christina Brent that following his teachings did not hinder their conformity to the external expectations and obligations of the convent.

The jewel in the crown of the study is undoubtedly Sarah Apetrei's chapter concerning mystical theology in early-Enlightenment England. It is here that the aim of the volume to display the impact of mystical theology 'across confessions and between cultures' (p. 24) is most obvious. Apetrei presents a nuanced analysis of the variety of attitudes towards the mystical 'way of knowing' (p. 201), which counterparts Cameron's earlier chapter in the volume. When read together, Cameron's theoretical framework compliments Apetrei's exploration of the consequences of such a theory in the polemical clashes between Anglicans, Catholics and Philadelphians in England. There is undoubtedly more work to be done in this interesting area of research.

The volume should be applauded for its attempt to offer a 'reassessment of medieval mysticism' (p. 5). But the reader should be aware of the dangers of carrying the concept of 'mysticism' itself forward into Reformation studies, as it is just as artificial and imaginary a construct as the one this volume seeks to dispel. Thankfully several scholars within this collection recognize this hazard, although a greater discussion of exactly what is meant by 'mysticism' in the introductory remarks would have been preferable. It is only through an ongoing awareness of the dangers of imposing artificial constructs onto the past that fruitful research into the role of mystical theology in early modern religion will emerge.

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Ian Haywood and John Seed, eds., *The Gordon Riots: Politics, culture and insurrection in late eighteenth-century Britain*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012; paperback edn. 2014, pp. xiii + 288, £19.99, ISBN: 978-1-107-47984-5

'The outrages which have been committed ... were so unexpected and so unaccountable, that one would be inclined to believe one's senses had deceived one'. Samuel Romilly's verdict on the Gordon Riots was echoed by a generation of Londoners. The prevailing sentiment among observers confronted with the trail of destruction was one of stunned bewilderment. The tumults that tore through the City, leaving the Bank of England bombarded, parliament shielded by soldiers, and Newgate gaol in flames, smashed through the certainties of Enlightenment England and unlocked traumas stored away within the kingdom's past. For Edward Gibbon, no admirer of the Catholic Church, it was as though 'forty thousand Puritans,